

BAPTISM INFORMATION



SOUTH BATHURST ANGLICAN PARISH

ST BARNABAS, BATHURST

ST PETERS, ROCKLEY

ST PAUL'S, YETHOLME

ST MARTIN'S, PERTHVILLE

Baptism is a happy and special event, usually the first 'formal' event in a child's life and it provides an opportunity for all the family, relatives and friends to come together.

We are pleased to be able to share it with you.

We have found that people celebrating baptism at our churches enjoy the service.

We hope that your baby's baptism will be a wonderful and memorable occasion and that it will mark the beginning of a long and happy association with our church.

This information will help you with some of the questions which surround baptism or Christening (Christian-making) as some prefer to call it. We do not put pressure upon parents or make them feel guilty about coming to church, but sometimes a baptism can remind us of how much we have let our own Christian life slip.

It can be an opportunity to affirm our trust in God and to make a fresh start. We hope that the welcome you receive will encourage you to feel a part of our church. We understand the effort involved for parents with young children to get organised and make a habit of going to church but parents who do are usually pleased that they took the trouble our Family Service happens every Sunday.

We welcome even noisy children to our services and provide an area with toys and encourage parents utilize the area during the service.

It is our sincere belief that there is no better thing that you can give to a child than the opportunity to learn about God and his love for them.

In the early years of a child's life they need to have this grounding of faith which will be vital for them if they are to develop into happy and balanced adults.

It is a great sadness that this opportunity is not made available to so many children but we will work with you to enable your child to be welcomed into the family of the church.

Please feel able to contact the priest to discuss baptism we will be pleased to spend time with you before and after the service.

Will you Christen our baby?

This is a question which we are often asked at St. Barnabas and the answer is YES!

We have never refused a request for baptism.

We look forward to welcoming you and your family to celebrate this important occasion. With you we will thank God for the birth of your baby, name the child with its Christian name and welcome a new member into the Christian family of the Church.

Of course if you are an adult who was not baptised as a child then we hope that baptism may be something which you would like to consider for yourself.

You will not be placed in any embarrassing situations, we will not make you feel guilty about coming to church, but we do encourage you to start thinking of this as your church. This information will give you answers to some of the questions which you may have; please contact the priest if you have further questions and they will be pleased to talk with you.

What is Baptism ?

- A chance for all the family to get together, celebrate and thank God for the new life which he has given.

- It is a time when we remember that as well as being a member of a human family your baby is a part of God's family too, the family of the Church.
- It is sacrament, that means an outward and visible sign of God's love.

When Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan he became aware of God as his Father and felt the special presence of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, it was a turning point in his life. After his death and resurrection Jesus commanded his followers to make new disciples and baptise them too. This has been done ever since by Christians throughout the world.

Why do we baptise babies?

Most parents feel a need to say 'thank you' to someone for the wonderful gift of their child, that 'someone' is of course the God who gives life to us all. Jesus told his disciples to baptise people who wanted to become Christians and join the church. The Bible tells us that whole households were being baptised and of course soon parents wanted their children to be baptised too.

Baptism is not like an insurance policy which you take out to make sure that your baby goes to heaven, God loves your child just as much now as after the baptism service. However it does make sense to give your child the very best start in life and what could be better than to encourage them from the very earliest days to be open to God and to know of His love for them.

Some churches do not baptise children until they are old enough to understand everything for themselves. However we do make all kinds of decisions on behalf of our children including schools and medical treatment as we do our best to encourage them in the best way for their lives.

We hope that you have decided to give your child the benefit of being welcomed into the church family, and we hope you will bring them along to church as you are able throughout these early years so that they can have the Christian start that they deserve.

In the baptism service we also pray that one day they will want as adults to stand up for themselves to confirm the baptism vows which have been made on their behalf: this is called Confirmation. If you would like a chance to think more about the Christian faith then you may like to join one of our groups which attract people of all ages and can lead to confirmation.

When will the baptism take place?

We love Baptisms take place in the Family Service on Sunday Morning at church, because part of the service is the welcoming of the child by the congregation.

Although we do have a number of Baptisms that happen outside of the church services they are called private Baptisms However we do like to welcome children before they baptised at one of our family services on a Sunday. At St. Barnabas the time of the Family service is 9.30am.

The Promises

We like Baptisms to take place during a service of worship because the congregation of the church is asked “Members of the Body of Christ, who are now in his name to receive this child, will you promise to maintain the common life of worship and service that all the children among you may grow in grace and in the knowledge of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord?” Thus the congregation is promising you and your child that it will provide facilities for his/her Christian upbringing - usually through Junior Church and other organisations. This promise is made on behalf of all churches.

After the congregation's promises, parents and Godparents will be asked to stand up and declare their own Christian faith. It is important to make sure that you can make these promises and only you can truthfully know that. If you have any difficulty we will discuss the promises with you; if you feel unable to say these things then perhaps you would prefer a service of Thanksgiving for the child and a naming ceremony. The choice is yours but a baptism is a very important occasion and not to be undertaken lightly.

Parents and godparents are invited to gather around the font, one family at a time. The Priest says to the parents and godparents:

You have brought this child to baptism. You must now declare before God and His Church the Christian faith into which she/he is to be baptised, and in which you will help her/him to grow. You must answer for yourself and for her/him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, who made the world?

Answer: *I believe and trust in him*

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ, who redeemed mankind?

Answer: *I believe and trust in him*

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God?

Answer: *I believe and trust in him*

The Priest says to the congregation

This is the faith of the Church.

All say: This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

There are then three questions about the way you intend to live your life. Parents and Godparents make the promises for themselves and also for the child.

They apply to their own lives and on behalf of the children for whom they will be responsible. Here are the questions with a short explanation;

Question 1 Do you turn to Christ?

You will answer - I turn to Christ

I want to change direction. I accept that my life is not totally my own. I acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and I will try to follow his teaching and his guidance for my life day by day.

Question 2 Do you repent of your sins?

You will answer - I repent of my sins

I'm sorry about the past and I know that I am accountable to God for my actions and thoughts. I can never be perfect but as I admit what is wrong he forgives and accepts me.

Question 3 Do you renounce evil?

You will answer - I renounce evil

I know that I sometimes have to make choices between good and evil. I want to set the evil behind me and from now on I will always try to choose the good.

Naming of a child

When the priest baptises the child she will ask what name you have chosen. This will be the Christian name for the child for the rest of its life. The Priest takes the child and says: N., I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Water

Water is a sign of cleansing and also an important sign of life. Water symbolises how we are all washed clean by God and forgiven and accepted by Him.

As we cannot live without water so this sign reminds us that we also need the cleansing and renewing presence of God in our lives.

The sign of the cross

The Priest will make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the child using the water.. This is a sign to remind us of how Christ died for each one of us on the cross. As Christ died for us so we are now signed with the cross -the badge of our faith - to remind us that we must not be ashamed to profess our faith and fight against all that is evil.

Priest: I sign with the cross, the sign of Christ. Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.
The congregation says: Fight valiantly under the banner of Christ against sin, the world and the devil, and continue his faithful soldier and servant to the end of your life.

The Lighted Candle

Following the baptism a lighted candle is given and the Priest says,

Receive this light ... this is to show that you have passed from darkness to light.
All say: Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.

The child will be presented with a small candle to show that in baptism we pass from darkness to light. Jesus is described in the Bible as the light of the world and as Christians we are to shine as lights in the world.

Our world needs now more than ever for us to all reject the ways of darkness and follow Christ in the Christian faith.

The Welcome

At the end of the baptism the congregation joins to say,

'We welcome you into the Lord's family. We are members together of the body of Christ; we are children of the same heavenly Father; we are inheritors of the kingdom of God. We welcome you.'

Records

A permanent record of the baptism with family details is recorded in the official registers of the church. A copy of this is given in the form of a special certificate which the church has printed, as a reminder of this day.

Godparents

You will need to consider names of godparents and these will be included in the church register and the baptism certificate.

Being asked to be a godparent is always a real privilege and shows that you have a special place in the family, but there are expectations and responsibilities too.

You are asked to promise that you will love and encourage the child in the Christian faith by prayer, example and teaching. Parents should not feel pressurised to choose the wrong people but try to find people who can make the promises and mean them.

Remember there is no right or wrong number of godparents; have as many or as few as you wish.

Did you know ?

Cry Baby.....

Superstitious people once thought that when a baby cried at Baptism it meant that it was the devil being cast out. In fact if a baby didn't cry it was thought a bad thing and some people even pinched their children to make them cry! Today we prefer not to upset children and hope that they do not get too upset by all the attention. However don't worry if they do cry and feel free to let the children wander around the Church during the service.

Godparents.....

Parents were once advised that they should choose three godparents for their baby, two of the same sex as the child. This is not a rule and you can have as many as you like, but you should have at least one Godmother and one Godfather. The Royal Family on the other hand tend to prefer to go for about six... well there's more presents!!

Cost.....

There is no charge for a baptism service. In all of our services an offering is taken at which we have an opportunity to give to the work of the church.

Fonts.....

Because Baptism is a sign of entering the Church the font which held the water was once nearly always situated at the main door of the church. Today we have the font at the front of the church. It is easier for everyone to see!

Prayers and readings

Your child is very special to you which is one of the reasons why you have gone to the effort to ask for baptism. Baptism is a wonderful time to say thank you to God for the gift of a child.

But of course your child isn't just your child - but God's as well. God loves your child and went to enormous lengths to show how much he loves all of his children, even to the point of dying on the cross. This means that in a sense there are no such things as single parents, God is a loving parent too. In the days and years ahead try to remember that you should not try to bring your child up on your own, but rather with the help and support of God as well. Here are some prayers and readings which you may find helpful.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, you welcomed children when others turned them away. Help me to love my child as you love her/him. Give me patience when I am tired, strength to cope when things get tough. Give your Holy Spirit of love and joy to abide in our home and keep us safe. Amen.

God so loved the world that he gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life
The Gospel of John Chapter 3 Verse 16 (The Bible)

Jesus said .. 'Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' The Gospel of Matthew Chapter 11 Verse 28 (The Bible)

**PRECIOUS ONE,
SO SMALL,
SO SWEET**

**DANCING IN
ON ANGEL FEET
STRAIGHT FROM HEAVEN'S
BRIGHTEST STAR**

**WHAT A MIRACLE
YOU ARE!**

A SERVICE OF BAPTISM



THE PREPARATION

THE GREETING AND INTRODUCTION

The priest says,

The Lord be with you.
All: **And also with you.**

The priest welcomes the congregation and introduces the service.

THE PREFACE

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...”
(Matthew 28:19).

Since Jesus first uttered those words, the church has been doing this very thing, albeit in a variety of ways and with a variety of understandings.

Anglicans call it a sacrament and baptise by sprinkling water on the head of a person. Anglicans baptise infants, others only those who can articulate their beliefs.

Indeed, the practice of baptism predates even the baptism of Jesus.

In biblical times, when Gentiles were attracted to the Jewish faith and wished to convert, they underwent a ritual of cleansing so that they could be reborn into their new faith and identity.

The images of baptism are rich and varied. More and more churches recognize the baptismal practices and understandings of others Christian denominations, affirming the sacred mystery that is baptism.

In the Anglican tradition baptism is an “incorporated into the Body of Christ” those baptised become members of the worldwide Christian Church, the Church Universal.

So we welcome you,with your parents, godparents and your wider family. We give thanks for you, and pray that you may know God's love and faithfulness for ever.

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

The Reading

Mark 10 : 13 – 16.

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

THE PRESENTATION

The priest invites the candidate and sponsors to stand

and present the candidate.

God is love. God gives us life.

We love because God first loves us.

In baptism God declares that love;

in Christ God calls us to respond.

So we welcomewho comes to be baptised.

Who stands with this child?

Parent's & Godparents stand and respond

We do

I invite the Parent's & Godparents to present the candidate.

Parent's & Godparents respond

**We present to be baptised
and made a member of the Body of Christ, the Church.**

THE DECISION

The priest says

From the beginning the Church has received believers by baptism. Believers children have also been baptised so that with help and encouragement they should grow up in Christ and by the grace of God serve Christ all the days of their life.

On the day when the apostles first preached the Gospel of Christ's resurrection, Peter urged his hearers
'Repent and be baptised, every one of you,
in the name of Jesus the Christ for the forgiveness of
your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who
are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God may call.'

How do you respond to this promise?

The parents and godparents reply:

We hear God's call and ask for baptism.

The priest says to the parents and godparents

Do you renounce all evil influences and powers
that rebel against God?

The parents and godparents reply

I renounce all evil.

The priest says

Do you trust in Christ's victory which brings forgiveness,
freedom and life?

The parents and godparents reply

**In faith I turn to Christ
my way, my truth, my life.
as I care for this child.**

All: May God keep you in the way you have chosen.

THE BAPTISM

The priest and family move to the font.

Praise God who made heaven and earth,

All: whose promise endures for ever.

The priest prays

We thank you God for your love in all creation,
especially for your gift of water to sustain,
refresh and cleanse all life.

We thank you for your covenant with your people Israel;
through the Red Sea waters you led them to freedom in the
promised land. In the waters of the Jordan your Son
was baptised by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

Through the deep waters of death

Jesus fulfilled his baptism. He died to set us free
and was raised to be exalted Lord of all.

It is Christ who baptises with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
Come Holy Spirit.

We thank you that through the waters of baptism you cleanse us, renew us by your Spirit and raise us to new life.

In the new covenant we are made members of your Church and share in your eternal kingdom.

Water is poured into the font

Through your Holy Spirit, pour out your blessing and sanctify this water so that once more your promises may be fulfilled in this water of rebirth, set apart in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Praise and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour, power and might, be to our God for ever and ever.

Amen.

The priest says to the congregation,

I now ask you to affirm as yours the faith of the Church.

An Affirmation of Faith

All stand and say together.

Let us affirm the faith of the Church,
All: **We believe in one God,
who made and loves all that is.
We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
Who was born, lived, died and rose again,
and is coming to call all to account.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who equips and sends out God's people,
and brings all things to their true end.**

This is our faith, the faith of the Church:
All: **We believe in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

The candidate is baptised with the words;

I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

**All: God receives you by baptism into the Church.
Child of God, blessed in the Spirit,
welcome to the family of Christ**

The priest makes the cross on the forehead of the candidate, saying;
We sign you with the cross to
mark you as Christ's own forever.

A lighted candle is given
Shine as a light in the world
and walk in the faith of Christ

Praise to God who forgives our sin.
All: Blessed be God who sets us free.

The priest then says to parents and godparents
How then will you care for this child?

The parents and godparents reply together
I will love and share my faith with them.

The priest says to the congregation
As the community of faith we rejoice at this baptism
and will share with what we ourselves have
received: a delight in prayer, a love for the word of God,
a desire to follow the way of Christ, and food for the
journey.

The priest then says to the child
..... you are now a pilgrim with us.
As a member of Christ's body, the Church,
you will be challenged to affirm your faith in God
and receive the laying on of hands in confirmation.
May you grow in the Holy Spirit, fulfil your ministry
and follow Christ your whole life long.

THE PRAYERS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come, your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those who sin against us.
 Save us from the time of trial
 and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
 now and for ever. Amen.**

FOR ALL WHO ARE BAPTISED

Gracious God,
Equip us to serve your people
and advance your gospel in the world.
Enable us to live in holiness and righteousness
and to please you in all that we do;
in the name of Jesus Christ Saviour. **Amen.**

AT THE BAPTISM OF A CHILD

Merciful God, in your infinite love you have made
a new covenant with us in your Son our Saviour Jesus
Christ, promising to be our God and the God of our children.
Enable all who are baptised in your name
to live as a covenant people.
Fulfil your promises for this child, we pray,
and grant that he may grow in your faith and service
until his life's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A PRAYER FOR PARENTS

Heavenly Father, we pray for parents ,
..... give them
the spirit of wisdom and love.
May all their children grow up to love and reverence you
and their home share in the joy of your love;
in the name of Christ. **Amen.**

FOR FAMILY

God of truth and love, we pray that whole family
will be enabled share with what you have
revealed to us in your holy gospel. **Amen.**

THE BENEDICTION

God bless you each with wisdom and love;
may find in you,
your homes and families,
Christ's love and understanding.

The priest gives the blessing and dismissal.

Go with the blessing of God Almighty,
Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, may this blessing
be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**IN OUR HOMES, WE ARE FAMILY,
IN THE CHURCH, WE ARE FAMILY,
IN THE COMMUNITY, WE ARE FAMILY,
IN THE WHOLE CREATION, WE ARE FAMILY.
IN EVERY PLACE, WE DEPEND ON GOD.**